

Message Text

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FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5778
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 08639

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PFOR, US, CA, VN, VS
SUBJECT: CANADIAN INTERVIEW WITH VIETNAM'S PRIME MINISTER

1. THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF A SEPTEMBER 2 INTERVIEW
BETWEEN THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR AND VIETNAM'S PRIME
MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG IN HANOI, WHICH THE CANADIAN
POLAD HAS CIRCULATED TO ALLIED DELEGATIONS.

2. CANADIAN POLAD ALSO SHOWED US THE REPORTING CABLE ON
THIS INTERVIEW, WHICH INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS
BY PHAM VAN DONG ON US-VIETNAM RELATIONS: AS FOR
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE USA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THESE
WILL CONTINUE WITH PERSEVERENCE. HE SAID HE BELIEVES
PRESIDENT CARTER TO BE A MAN OF GOOD WILL WHO COULD,
IN TIME, USE THE RESOURCES OF THE PRESIDENCY TO
INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION ON VIETNAM AS HE WAS DOING ON
THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY. THE PRIME MINISTER ARGUED THAT
THE US MUST RECOGNIZE ITS MORAL OBLIGATION TO HELP IN
THE RECONSTRUCTION OF VIETNAM, NORTH AND SOUTH, WHICH
THE US HAD CLOBBED WITH MORE BOMBS THAN IT DROPPED ON
GERMANY IN WORLD WAR II. VIETNAM WOULD BE FLEXIBLE
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ON THE METHODS BUT WOULD PERSEVERE.
BEGIN TEXT:

VIETNAM'S DOMESTIC PRIORITIES

THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT THE WAR TO LIBERATE AND
UNIFY VIETNAM HAD BEEN WON OVER TWO YEARS AGO AND THAT

THE 4TH PARTY CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM IN DECEMBER HAD SET GOALS FOR BUILDING SOCIALISM IN THE SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN. HOWEVER, A RARE COLD SPELL LAST WINTER IN THE NORTH FOLLOWED BY A DROUGHT IN NORTH AND CENTER AND A TYPHOON IN JULY IN THE RED RIVER DELTA HAD SHOWN THAT THE GRAIN SUPPLY, WHICH HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO BE IN DEFICIT UNTIL 1981 OR 82, COULD TURN TO A DISASTROUS SHORTAGE. THE FIRST PRIORITY WAS THEREFORE TO MOBILIZE ALL EFFORTS TO SAVE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THE SPRING RICE CROP WHOSE TRANSPLANTING SHOULD HAVE BEEN COMPLETED IN JULY BUT WAS NOT YET COMPLETE. EVEN SO, THERE WAS AN URGENT NEED FOR FURTHER GRAIN IMPORTS. OTHER DOMESTIC PRIORITIES WERE: (A) OPENING UP ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL LAND, INCLUDING FOR EXPORT CROPS; (B) IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM; (C) LIGHT INDUSTRY TO MEET CONSUMER NEEDS AND (D) BUILDING EXPORTS TO BEGIN TO MEET FOREIGN EXCHANGE REQUIREMENTS.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT FOLLOWING THE VOTE ON ADMISSION OF VIETNAM TO THE UNGA THEY WOULD SEND ONE OF THEIR IMPORTANT LEADERS TO MAKE AN INITIAL SPEECH WHICH I HOPED WOULD EMPHASIZE COOPERATION WITH ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES AND NOT EXPRESS GRADATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES AND THEN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.

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COUNTRIES. HE SAID THE SRVN APPRECIATED CANADIAN SUPPORT FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. A WORTHY REPRESENTATIVE WOULD ATTEND THE UNGA AND CONFIRM SRVN POLICY OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL BENEFIT. THE SRVN HAD ESTABLISHED GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL GOVERNMENTS EXCEPT THOSE OF THAILAND AND THE USA.

I SAID THAT THE MIXTURE OF COMMUNIST PARTY IDEOLOGY WITH THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF VIETNAM AND LAOS IN THE VIENTIANE DECLARATION OF JULY 18 APPEARED TO MANY OBSERVERS AS MENACING. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THAT DECLARATION NEEDED TO BE UNDERSTOOD. SOME ELEMENTS IN THE THAI GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED AFTER THE MILITARY COUP D'ETAT OF OCTOBER 1976, WERE CONNIVING WITH FEUDAL AND RIGHTIST ELEMENTS THAT HAD FLED FROM LAOS TO THAILAND AND TRIED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FOOD SHORTAGE BY BLOCKADE AND RAIDS ACROSS THE MEKONG TO DESTABILIZE THE SITUATION IN LAOS. LAOS WAS VIETNAM'S WESTERN BORDER AND INSTABILITY THERE WOULD MENACE THE SECURITY OF VIETNAM. THE VIETNAM-LAOS TREATY AND

DECLARATION WERE INTENDED TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THE NEW SOCIALIST GOVERNMENTS AND PARTIES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD STAND TOGETHER AND THAT LAOS COULD LOOK TO VIETNAM FOR FULL SUPPORT.

PHAM VAN DONG SAID VIETNAM WAS PREPARED TO PROCEED WITH BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THAILAND ON THE BASIS OF FORMULA AGREED WITH THE PRE-COUP GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAILAND WAS UNSTABLE AND THE PRESENT LEADERS SOUGHT TO PRESERVE THEIR POSITIONS BY ADOPTING AN ANTI-LAO, ANTI-VIETNAM STAND. WHEN I COMMENTED THAT THE VIENTIANE DECLARATION COULD BE READ AS ENCOURAGING ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY IN THAILAND, HE REPLIED "NOUS N'EXPORTONS PAS LA

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